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The Death of Gracchus

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The Death of Gracchus

A Tragedy

BY

EDWIN SAUTER

PRIVATE EDITION

Saint Louis
1908

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"A tragedy is not a history," said Voltaire:—Accordingly, in order to approximate the unities of time and action, it is assumed in this composition that Lucius Opimius is Roman consul at the time the play opens, with the annual election of tribunes about to take place; Caius Gracchus in the second scene closing a personal canvass for re-election, being opposed as candidate by Livius Drusus, the friend of Opimius, and most strenuously in the canvass by the pragmatcal consul. The action embraces only such events as logically lead to, or may fairly seem to be connected with, Gracchus's tragic end. Furthermore, it is assumed that the abrogation of the tribune's reforms by Opimius, as dictator, takes place immediately after Gracchus's defeat, being followed as swiftly by the latter's death. The story is simple, and developed without intrigue, being essentially that of Plutarch;—beyond circumscribing the time, dramatic license is invoked no further than to furnish a suitable background in general, an old mother to Quintus Antyllius, and, finally, a fateful dagger from Licinia's hand to Caius Gracchus. What is true of the plot obtains likewise of the dialogue—no poetic flights are attempted, no purely verbal embellishments are tacked on anywhere.—This treatment, it is to be conceded, leaves the dramatic paucity of the subject in evidence in the play.

*1331 North Seventh Street,
SAINT LOUIS, April 17, 1907.*

The Death of Gracchus

Dramatis Personae.

CAIUS SEMPRONIUS GRACCHUS.

LUCIUS OPIMIUS, *dominant consul—chief enemy of Gracchus.*

MARCUS LIVIUS DEUSUS, *a tribune in the interest of the Senate.*

FULVIUS FLACCUS, *former consul—chief partisan of Gracchus.*

POMPONIUS, *friend of Gracchus.*

QUINTUS ANTYLLIUS, *follower and attendant of Optimus.*

SEPTIMULEIUS, *another follower.*

LUCIUS FABIUS, *second consul.*

CORNELIUS, } *sons of Fulvius Flaccus.*
ANTONIUS, }

LICINIUS, *a follower of Gracchus, who checked his vehemence in speaking with a flute.*

PHILOCRATES, *a freedman, personal attendant of Gracchus.*

CORVUS, *a petty demagogue.*

CORNELIA, *mother of the Gracchi.*

LICINIA, *wife of Gracchus.*

MUCIA, *blind mother of Antyllus.*

Two Patricians, Lictors, Tribunes, Senators, Clients, Priests, Augurs, Messengers, Soldiers, Slaves, Attendants, Child, Crier, and Citizens, named and unnamed.

SCENE—Rome, 121 B. C.

Prologue

*Children are wiser than their parents—All
Undirched and verdant in that error fall;—
And ages new and nations in their youth
In judging others shoot as wide of truth.
Now child, now man, now hero, and now clown,
With passions ever up and reason down,
Where'er the scene, whatever age or clime,
The living wight's the darling birth of time—
Imago he, he flits the garish stage,
And deems all grubs that lived before his age. 10
Historians know, howe'er the farce may run,
There's nothing really new beneath the sun—
Customs may vary, man remains the same,
Part god, more brute, half glory, and half shame:
And in their book, trimmed, finished and collated,
All ages look alike, consutilated.
Then come, thou shrieking and unthinking time,
Thou tink'ring, putt'ring, o'er-pragmatic time,
Thou time of mediocrity and boldness,
Of literary and artistic coldness— 20
Come! turn the page, and see thyself in Rome,
And in her story read what is to come.*

Act One.

TIME—Morning of the first day.

SCENE I.—*The Wine-shop at the Sign of the Cock, near the Market-place.*

Enter VINTNER, a COBBLER, and a TAILOR.

Vintner. By Silenus, I say he must be defeated.

Cobbler. I say so too. Down with Latins! [*Aside.*] Drink his wine and vote for Gracchus, Pluto.

Tailor. [*Aside.*] You know my mind, Mars. [*Aloud.*] A pretty pass! Truly, the hem must lord it over the tunic.

Vintner. Pithily put; spoke like a true patriot.

Enter a broken SOLDIER, a BUTCHER, three

HUSBANDMEN, a CARPENTER, and a SMITH.

Soldier. Patriots are dead, valor is dead, everything good is dead. [*Sits himself apart.*]

Vintner. [*To Butcher.*] Proculus, welcome. Romans, I salute you. By Bacchus, we will all drink a cup to good company and the Cock.

[*Exit, bellowing "Wine, slaves, wine!"*]

First Husbandman. It comes to the vote. Caius Gracchus must be tribune, friends.

Second. The promise of the golden age is in his speeches, his acts bear fruit to his words, and none hate him but villains.

The Death of Gracchus.

Act I.

Third. The poor may all hang in one halter if we elect him not. Say you not so, honest citizens?

Butcher. What signify politicians? By Priapus, all are swine that nose in the public trough. [*Calls loudly.*] Villain Bovius! that cask will hold no more water.

Re-enter VINTNER with boys bringing wine.

Vintner. Citizens, envy no man's Falernian,—see, Bovius serves the best in Rome. Brisk, rascals! Proculus, I fill to thee myself.

Soldier. Julius fought with both Scipios—what signifies Julius now? The shambles are honored before the conqueror. [*Hobbles out, muttering.*]

Butcher. O great Tiber! *Bene tibi, vivas.* [*Drinks.*]

Vintner. Ha, ha! Mixed wine for sober men, they say. But Bovius walks not so far, Proculus. [*All hands round.*]

Butcher. But I say, as to politics, let them crack the drum of echo's ear with their speeches, I'll bolt none of their arguments.

Smith. Nor I.

Butcher. Give a politician a bull's hide and he'll steal a city, like Dido.

Vintner. A truce to your quips, Proculus.

Butcher. But a sack of corn and a circus—tut, all love him. The people's understanding is a searce that sifts nothing.

Vintner. 'Tis Drusus loves us, not Gracchus, neighbors.

Scene I.

The Death of Gracchus.

Tailor. Twelve colonies he sends out where Gracchus would grudge two.

Vintner. Who provides more spectacles for the people?

Butcher. Thereby helping honest Bovius to our sestertii more briskly. Threw Gracchus down any of thy scaffolds, paunch?

Vintner. And again, Drusus makes not knights with judicial powers, but he charges no rent for public lands, Romans.

First Husbandman. Tricks, citizens, all tricks. Are all taken with hocus-pocus? The Senate owns Livius.

Enter CORVUS.

Corvus. Who talks here of the Senate? Bovius, hail.

Vintner. [*Loudly.*] Livius Drusus is a patriot! Welcome, Corvus.

Corvus. Can any Roman doubt it?

Vintner. Sylvanus does. Convince the gentlemen, Corvus, while Bovius re-fills their cups.

Corvus. [*Mounting a stool.*] Ha, is it Gracchus, my friends? Is it Drusus? You shall judge. Said Scipio Africanus the day he triumphed—I tell not to whom—Corvus, thou hast saved thy country. [*The BUTCHER begins to sing.*] Who loves the people? Corvus. Who mortifies the rich? Corvus. Who does all great things? Corvus. [*The BUTCHER throws his cup at the cat.*] But what is the pith of the matter?

The Death of Gracchus.

Act I,

It is this, countrymen—we are Romans, sons of Trojans. Let him drown in an Etruscan sewer who has Latin blood in his veins, ay, or Latin love in his heart—he shall never rule Rome. Let all the wood-choppers come—Bovius shall still sell drink, Mars patch shoes, and Proculus weigh tripe with both hands laid heavy on the scales. And so I am for Drusus. [*Gets down—Much applause—Propination.*]

Enter SEPTIMULEIUS.

Septim. Friends, the consul appeals for Drusus in the forum. Come, hear Gracchus baited. Corvus, a word with you.

[*Walks out with CORVUS—Exeunt omnes hastily.*]

SCENE II.—*The Forum, before the temple of the counselling deities.*

OPIMIUS, DEUSUS, GRACCHUS, ANTYLLIUS, FULVIUS, POMPONIUS.—CORVUS, SEPTIMULEIUS, *etc.*, *enter as OPIMIUS mounts the steps of the temple to address the multitude.*

Opim. Romans! your voices. Down with tyrants, friends,
And Rome for Romans be your watchword all.
Gods! must I plead, when worse than Gauls invade
The holy precincts of our capitol?
Why throng the jackals? What brings vultures nigh?

Scene II.

The Death of Gracchus.

Is valor dead? Rome carrion? Law obruted?
I will not ask you have you honor, friends,
Nor charge one Roman with a recreant soul,—
Nay, I scarce know that Rome needs Latin guardians,
Italian votes, lawgivers, governors—
He best can tell who bribes those foreigners,
To rob the citizens whom Scipio loved.
Ah, Africanus!—Soft! the man is dead now,
And opening of that door might pinch some fingers;
I would not for the world offend a Roman—
Let Scipios die! that most concerns relations.*
I speak but to remind you that the tribune
Serves best his countrymen who loves them best.
Rome, Romans, and the Senate! Down with Gracchus!

[Descends and turns as if to go, but stops as GRACCHUS speaks.]

Gracch. *[Tranquilly.]* Citizens! Romans! Have I deserved death?

Many voices. No, no, no!

Others. Never, never!

Gracch. Ah, friends,
Think what ye do—the cause is capital,
My life depends upon the tribuneship;
Yes! every vote against me is for death.
Again, have I deserved it?

*Scipio Africanus Junior was found dead after a violent public altercation with some of Gracchus's partisans; and rumor implicated not only those partisans but even Caius Gracchus himself in his death.

The Death of Gracchus.

Act I,

[LICINIUS crosses and retires behind the temple.

Omnes. Never!

Fulv. Gracchus for tribune!

Opim. Roma! Roma!

Many. Gracchus, Gracchus, Gracchus.

Gracch. Ye know how I have served you,
And how before me dead Tiberius served you—
I would not speak of that! And yet the Tiber
Swells now, perhaps, those yellow waves for Caius
Which hide his brother's bones and memory.

[*Murmurs.*

Friends! Gracchi die that all men may be equal.

Fulv. Down with the murderers!

Gracchus for tribune!

Many. Gracchus for tribune.

Gracch. [*Passionately.*] Reform! Equality!
Death, I defy thee, so I serve my country.
Wind loud truth's trumpet, friends; cry out the issue,
And answer, Commons! from the seven hills—
'Tis class or nation, privilege or mankind!

[LICINIUS blows his flute softly from his place of
concealment.

Fulv. Hear your tribune, ho!

Gracch. [*Tranquilly again.*] We have agrarian
laws,

Late resurrected by your martyred tribune,
But they scarce balk the rich man's bold aggressions,
Prone to corrupt where overt acts avail not.

Scene II.

The Death of Gracchus.

Abuses still abound as gross as when,
Absorbed in latifundia, public lands
By knavery and collusion were diverted
To swell dishonest fortunes. Romans, Romans!
Thieves rob the state while good men stand on ceremony

To call them to account. But vote for Gracchus,
And shortly shall he launch a thunderbolt
Whose flash will clear our Roman sky of roguery,
And trebly roborate Licinius' laws;
Whose wise provisions, dinned in your surd ears,
I will not now rehearse. I ask your ballots.

Optim. False Gracchus! wilt not put the issue
rightly?

Thou wouldst have Italy to govern Rome.

Drusus. False Gracchus! wilt not put the issue
briefly?

Thou wouldst be lord then over Italy.

Antyll. False Gracchus! wilt not put the issue
frankly?

Thou wouldst be king. [*Turbulent movements and
outcries arise.*]

Optim. O Caius Gracchus,
Why are reformers all ambitious men?—
Intriguing meddlers, bent on public notice,
If strong, tyrannical; if true, illiberal!
Rash agitation breeds but discontent;
While true ability may raise itself,

The Death of Gracchus.

Act I,

Leave classes as they are,—inversion mends not:
Those who are poor strive madly to be rich,
But growing so flaunt thrice the rich man's vices,
Changing but places; t' other being poor,
Would bark against those rich. Unmake our nature,
And then first think to reform society.

Drusus. Who fans class prejudice into popular fury
Commits an arson on the commonwealth;
And in the night of misrule and confusion,
When rancor blazes highest, helps himself
As oft as not to office and rich spoils,
Like any other firebrand.

[*FULVIUS would speak, but is restrained by*
GRACCHUS.

Opim. The whole of life's an idle fritinant hour,
And offices but marbles; honors, spinning-tops;
Riches, a bag of cakes; and love a dice-game,
Which passion cogs against us. What wouldst have?
The world has certain rules of ancient prestige,
For precedence and just subordination
Adapted by experience to its needs:
These wise men honor, patient in all parts,
And time's rotations bring to each his own,
All profiting by public harmony.

Gracch. Why dominate the playground, just *Opim-*
ius?
For all thy proud disparagement of life,
Perhaps we love the cakes as well as you do,

Scene II.

The Death of Gracchus.

Perhaps the tops might give us equal joy;
Of dice I know not much, but, in plain plebeian,
Perhaps the love which warms the poor man's bosom,
The honest flame of continent embraces,
Lights up his cottage with a sweeter rapture
Than rich men know who in some gilded sty
From harlot lips waft to a bought elysium.
Say, may he have his little ground and cottage?

Fulv. Noble Roman! Hear your tribune, hear!

Gracch. Stand back, cruel riches! Arrogance, give
way!

I plead the cause of ancient right, of nature
And instinct, god's voice whispering in our ear,
Which tells us all have equal right to live,
All equal right to earth and Ceres' blessings,
Since rich and poor
Earth's by one common procreant sun, co-heirs
To sin, disease, to suffering and death!

[The flute sounds again, more sweetly.]

Privileged optimates, vouchsafe to listen,
And let the poor man cast his quoit among ye,
To modify our consul's simile,—
This haughty Roman who, to serve his friends,
E'en stoops to canvass in the market-place—
Or is his purpose but to ruin Gracchus?
Whate'er it be, puff, let it pass;—I sue
To the plain people for the tribunate—
What business, say, is that of yours, patricians?

The Death of Gracchus.

Act I,

First Citizen. By Jupiter, he hits the consul.

Second. Let him canvass now if he will for Drusus, meddler.

Third. Did not Gracchus for Fannius?

Fourth. What shouts Antyllus? Hear.

Antyll. He would be king, not tribune!

Who bows before the scepter? Hail, King Gracchus!

Corvus. Italian king of Rome,

Great Gracchus, hail! Corvus kneels to you.

[Does so in mockery—POMPONIUS kicks him.]

Septim. Gracchus to the Tarpeian!

Is he better than Marcus Manlius?

Optim. *[Mildly.]* Citizens, citizens.

Antyll. Down with the usurper, down!

Many. Down with him, down.

[CORVUS, SEPTIMULEIUS, and a throng of partisans move concertedly on GRACCHUS—FULVIUS stops them.]

Fulv. Murder Gracchus, madmen? Never, never,
He is your friend, not Drusus. What, be cozened
By three stool-pigeons? Do—so were your fathers
Who butchered Manlius. Citizens, Romans,
Corvus and Septimuleius are your enemies,
Not less than cursed Antyllus and Optimus,
Malignant most—Now linked with Drusus' interests
Since one with our latrocinary Senate.
Long live Gracchus, long live Gracchus!

Citizens. Long live Gracchus!

Scene II.

The Death of Gracchus.

Opim. Disorderly breed of Remus!

Lictors, ho, lictors! Protect our person.

Enter LICTORS, *thrusting back citizens and surrounding* OPIMIUS—*In the scuffling the latter's toga is torn, and he roughly handled—GRACCHUS remaining disdainfully passive throughout.*

Gracch. Order, order, citizens,—

Keep the law, my friends.

Opim. Lictors, forbear. We would not touch thee,
Gracchus,

That comes not in our dreams:—Thou'rt sacrosanct,
With Lucius' leave mayst so remain forever.

Fulvius, thou'rt ever bent on violence,—

Thy unruly spirit fosters bloodshed;—

Rome will not brook thee long, be well assured.

Lictors, attend.—We love the public weal,

And all our care is that and Rome's best interests,

And saying so I speak for all the Senate.

But, ah, a consul is not safe in Rome—

See! by this robe, Opimius speaks the truth.

[*Exeunt* OPIMIUS *cum suis*, DRUSUS, *etc.*

Pompon. That same robe in the senate-house anon
He'll show, lamenting.

Gracch. Ah Fulvius, Fulvius, what a knave is this!

Fulv. There's cunning in the man and leadership;—
His fierce spirit quells Rome while it heckles.
Hadst thou but some of it! [*Aside.*

The Death of Gracchus.

Act I,

Gracch. Good citizens, disperse, and find your tribes;
You love your tribune—doubly shall he serve you.

[*Exeunt* CITIZENS.]

Come, Fulvius, come, Pomponius;—the Comitia
Convenes not for some hours:—We must take counsel,
For much I fear this Drusus will preside there.

[*Exeunt*—LICIINIUS *re-crosses from behind the temple, following them, a flute sticking out of his cloak.*

SCENE III.—A street.

Enter two PATRICIANS, *meeting.*

First. Hail, Camillus. What news?
How turns the election?

Second. Hail, Marcus. All's dark and dubious,
Like a poor lover's courtship.

First. What think'st of Gracchus?

Second. Who rides a mettled steed at a mad gallop
Might carry the surgeon's fee for broken bones.

First. True, Camillus,—falls rule at the dismount-
ing.

Thou lovest him not?

Second. Nay, Marcus. Government is prudence,
And states fare best when men of moderate counsels
Are at the helm,—who steer by wisdom's pole.

Scene IV.

The Death of Gracchus.

Give me few laws, few offices, few Gracchi!
Reform is not the making of a law,
Reform is not enforcement of a statute,
Reform is not duress, restraint or punishment—
'Tis palingenesis, and works within;
'Tis cleansing of the heart, the mind, the spirit,
And comes from poets and philosophers,
From educators, artists, great examples
Of high heroic action and devotion;
And most despiseth what all politicians,
Or great or small, fish for and live by—votes!

First. But laws still multiply, and with them
offices,
That curse of all republics:—while we dole them
There must be thieves to fill 'em—and reformers.
Thence breeds our public bed its vermin.

Second. Thou speak'st what best accords
With the world's history and philosophy.
Vale.—I retire to my villa.

First. I go to Athens. Vale.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The atrium of GRACCHUS's house.*

GRACCHUS, FULVIUS, POMPONIUS, LICINIUS, and a
throng of clients.

Gracch. Quintus, the centurion,
Your general shall be impeached. Lucius Laelius,

The Death of Gracchus.

Act I.

The commission awards the land. For you,
Decius, the carpenter, we have seen the quaestor,
And think your suit is won. Pluto, Pluto,
Our stitching craftsman, where is gone your skill?
Licinia swears this toga that I wear
Was cut upon the bias—nay, nay, mind it not,
We know her taste is finical. Valerius,
Thy child was indiscreet,—a maid so handsome
Should sure scent mischief when a senator's son
Philanders her in secret. Manlius Fovius,
Is thy wife yet—ah well, we wish her luck.
Licinius—where's Licinius? Bear this veto
Post-haste unto the Senate; this other paper
Leave with the edile. [*Exit LICINIUS.*] O my friends,
 dear friends,
Forget not the Comitia, nor our cause,
Which lives but by your favor—Fare you well,
Most worthy excellent friends, farewell all,—
We meet you there.—Use all your influence
With those you know. [*Exeunt CLIENTS.*]

Fulv. What about the Latins? We now have here
Enough hardy rascals to make a cohort.

Pompon. Furnish all with arms.

Gracch. What, arms?

Fulv. First our imports vote for us; each tribe
Hath of the spurious names a score or two,
To offset treachery on the other side:
If that fails they will fight for us.

Scene IV.

The Death of Gracchus.

Gracch. Alas, alas, must Rome have civil war?

Fulv. If need be—

Fail, Gracchus, and the consul will destroy us.
He would essay it now did not thy office
Protect us from his cautelous revenge:
The hellish deed he shirks not, but the odium
Thereof he reckons on in his deep policy,—
Caius to reach the Styx as went Tiberius,
Might rouse the people to a revolution.
But meet defeat and thou art lost—In Rome
A Gracchus to fall means a Gracchus to die,
And with him all partisans.

Gracch. That last moves me most—
But, Fulvius, vouch the issue. To the touch
Put thus by evil men, right may use force
To evince the wrong—So violence be successful.
Look to the issue!

Fulv. Fear not, if force must arbitrate,—
Flaccus triumphs when he plans a campaign.
The spoils of war won in my Gallic battles
Hang in my house—These will equip our friends.
Pomponius, come, we must bestow the Latins
Where best they may be found.

Gracch. Fall not to be in the market-place.

Fulv. Fear not, Gracchus, we will not.

[Exeunt FULVIUS and POMPONIUS.]

Enter LICINIA.

Lic. Caius, the portents all are ominous—
Look to thy safety.

The Death of Gracchus.

Act I,

Gracch. Thou art a Roman matron,
And dost thou daunt—who shouldst for aye inspire!

Lic. Alack, two of the penates
Crushed by a stumbling slave, who sprawled his
length

Athwart our hearth, forebodes some dire disaster.
Not less recall how in re-peopling Carthage,
Now called Junonia, thou hadst evil auguries—
O scorn them not!—The gusty winds then blew
Thy standards down, and swept away the sacrifice;
And, worse, that night wolves flched thy landmarks
thence:

Thy fortunes, Caius, from that day decline.

Gracch. I scorn not omens,
But courage is my augur, not wan fear;
And sanity is scarce impiety,
E'en though it see not in such plain mischances
All that which superstition's dusky eye
Dilates o'er, and exaggerates.

Lic. My Caius, what words!
Dost thou deny the gods?

Gracch. Peace! be tranquil;
I go but to my triumph, and the shouts
Of thunderous approval from the forum,
Borne to thy ears as Rome salutes her tribune,
Will tell thee how the people love their friend,
Superior to the specious arts of policy,
Which would essay, presumptuous! to deceive them.

Scene V.

The Death of Gracchus.

Lic. So thought Tiberius. [*Turns away and weeps.*
Gracch. Hah! is this comfort?

[*Exit, LICINIA following.*

SCENE V.—A room in DRUSUS's house.

DRUSUS and OPIMIUS alone.

Opim. Drusus, pursue with confidence thy design,—
If he, denied the tribunate, rebel,
Opimius and the power of Rome shall crush him—
The Senate as one man seeks his destruction.

Drusus. We will read him out with false ballots,—
Though every man in every tribe vote Gracchus,
They mark in vain their *puncta* 'gainst his name.
The Senate hates him for his usurpations,
His colleagues hate him for his arrogance,
And, all eclipsed, anticipate his downfall
With secret joy; as for the commonalty,
Thou know'st I've played his own cajoling game,
And half undone him in their changeful hearts,
Which all import not—As they failed Tiberius,
So will they Caius.

Opim. Yes, yes:—braggarts in convention,
Cruel, arbitrary and tyrannical,
The people taken singly are as diffident
Of instituted power as are young mice

The Death of Gracchus.

Act I, Scene V.

Of daylight and the cat:—And danger, Drusus,
Makes 'em feel singly.

Drusus. Then fail not Drusus, and it is done.

Optim. By Pluto, I will not;

Do thou but this, Lucius perfects the rest. [*Exit.*

Enter a TRIBUNE.

Drusus. Well, what may be done with Publius,—
This Publius who alone stands out?

Tribune. Our fellow, Junius, labors with him—
He comes.

Enter other TRIBUNES.

Second Trib. I am persuaded,
And Drusus' wishes now are my commands.

Drusus. To the Comitia!
Gracchus, thy fate is sealed—and Rome preserved.
[*Exeunt.*

Act Two.

TIME—Afternoon of the first day.

SCENE I.—*The Forum, before the tribunal rostra—
The Comitia in session, with DRUSUS on the
stand, holding a scroll. GRACCHUS,
FULVIUS, POMPONIUS, SEPTIMULI-
IUS, CORVUS, etc., in the fore-
ground among the
citizens.*

Drusus. 'Tis here engrossed,
Ye men of Rome, what tribunes have been chosen.
[*Reads.*] Junius Publiculus, Marcus Livius Drusus,
Lucius Sulpicius Alius, Caius Fabricius,
Decius Pomposus, Julius Publius Celius,
Cneius Cossus, Marcus Fulvius Fovius,
Publius Sylvius, Quintus Spurius Posthumius.

[*A loud outcry from GRACCHUS's party.*

Gracch. How, Drusus!—Read again.

Drusus [*Reads.*] Junius Publiculus, etc.
These I declare now lawfully elected
By a full vote of Rome's assembled tribes.

Gracch. Gracchus not tribune?

Drusus. Thy sun is set, disturber,—
Thou art defeated.

Gracch. Not tribune, not tribune?

The Death of Gracchus.

Act II,

Drusus. The college of Rome's tribunes
Under my presidency hath polled the tribes,
And counted all the votes by centuries,
But found thine wanting. Is it not enough?
Thou canst go home now, Caius Sempronius Gracchus—

Buy a new house—one not so near the forum.

Gracch. Caius Gracchus not tribune?

[*Advances up the rostrum.*]

Drusus. Dost court rough treatment, such as once
Octavius

Had from thy tyrant brother? Get you down.

[*Waves attendants.*]

Gracch. My friends, the presiding tribune is
merry—

How, villain, violence! to a tribune!

Drusus. Such wast thou once, such mayst thou be
no more,—

Who vote to-day are Romans, not Italians.

[ATTENDANTS approaching to put him down,
GRACCHUS descends the rostrum—FULVIUS,
POMPONIVS, and others surrounding and encouraging him—Uproar increasing.]

Fulv. So, Caius, thou art swindled out of office,
And all thy laws shall shortly be expunged—
Too late thou learnst how far thy foes will go.
O Romans, these returns are fraudulent,
'Tis Drusus votes them, not the Roman people—

Scene I.

The Death of Gracchus.

I see the Senate's stilus in his hand,
I read the Senate's will in that same scroll,
Whence he pretends to tell your suffrages.
False, perjured Drusus! cleanse those lying lips,
And give the tribunate to Caius Gracchus,
Or perish for thy folly.

[Menacing DRUSUS—Increasing tumult, more and more of GRACCHUS'S partisans surging to the front and cheering on FULVIUS.]

Drusus. For this, too, Fulvius,
Rome is prepared.

[Claps his hands—Enter an armed guard, surrounding the rostrum and pushing back all citizens.]

Gracch. Fulvius, desist,—my will is not for blood-shed.

Drusus, thy colleagues all concur in this?

Several Tribunes. All, all—The count is right.

Drusus. Hear them, ye Roman people—
Let honest voices drown sedition's slanders.

Fulv. Quirites! will ye be ruled with this sceptre?

[Holding up an iron stilus used in writing.]

Pompon. *[Taking it.]* The point will stick—
Geese might be killed with it.

Gracch. Peace, peace, my friends,—hold your unruly tongues.

Drusus, content—Well hast thou played thy part;—
Triumph till thou art called to give account

The Death of Gracchus.

Act II.

For what this day's collusion now brings forth.
We for the present bow our heads in silence,
And those dark thoughts which maugre charity
Rise and obtrude on us will strive to stifle.
If Rome acquits thee, Drusus, so must Gracchus.
[Turns away—Scene closes.]

SCENE II.—A street.

Enter CITIZENS riotously, including CORVUS, SEPTIMULEIUS, the VINTNER, BUTCHER, etc.

Corvus. Friends, you did nobly.

Vintner. All remembered the Latins coming over us.

Septim. That justly defeated Gracchus.

Tailor. Humph, he stitched not his arguments so neatly that we saw not the color of his thread. Reformers but make coats for their own backs, anyway—in the end sorry ones.

Corvus. True, Pluto. But, honest citizens, know, Corvus had no designs of his own in defeating Gracchus—'twas to save Rome.

Butcher. [*Boisterously.*] Ho, ho, ho! again? Corvus defeated Gracchus? Hector heifer, leave the dug—go, lord it over the herd, do.

Vintner. Proculus, thou'rt known for a blunt man.

Scene II.

The Death of Gracchus.

Why indeed didst not stand for the tribuneship thyself, Corvus?

Corvus. Bovius, I give thee my confidence—The plebeian consulship soon—

Enter HUSBANDMEN and other CITIZENS, fighting.

First Husb. For Gracchus that! [*Beating citizen.*]
Feel country brawn, tinker.

First Cit. Have at you, dog of a Sabine.

Sec. Husb. There, there—Feel another.

Butcher. Here's sport—For the honor of Rome, ha!
[*Joining in.*]

Corvus. Friends, we know our side?

Vintner. That do we. Down with Gracchus!

Septim. Down with Gracchus! [*General fighting.*]

Enter FULVIUS, POMPONIUS, and others.

Fulv. What traitor cry was that? Didst hear, Pomponius?

Pompon. Ay—Look, we have friends here.

Fulv. Lay on, Trojans! Bravo, myrmidons!

Corvus. Down with Gracch—Help!

[*POMPONIUS beats him*]

Fulv. Cursed windpipe of a slave, here's help and plenty.

[*Beats him too—Scene closes with a melee in progress.*]

The Death of Gracchus.

Act II,

SCENE III.—A room in ANTYLLIUS's house.

Enter MUCIA, supported by ANTYLLIUS.

Mucia. Quintus, I thank you—
Come, sit close to me. [*They recline.*] Tell me of the
state—

Will Gracchus sway or Lucius Opimius?

Antyll. Opimius will prevail,—
Livius Drusus and his friends are tribunes:
Anarch discountenanced must hide his head,
Since doffed his crown his discipline is near.
Say, why that sigh?

Mucia. Ah, be not froward in this enterprise,
Nor make thy tongue a deadly hostile sword,—
I know thy weakness—ready to affront,
Rash zeal leads thee to dangerous excess.
Spare then the prostrate—When thou most wouldst
triumph,
Speak most in charity: foes won are strongest friends.

Antyll. [*Impatiently.*] Have done, my mother.
Our foes are proud, ambitious, overbearing,
A breed ne'er conquered save by extirpation,—
And, equal to that task, Opimius scorns them.
Come sup, and be more cheerful.

Enter SLAVE with food.

Mucia. Serve then the repast:—
And mayst thou relish it—from our own garden

Scene III.

The Death of Gracchus.

The herbs were plucked,—our first shallots, Quintus.

[The SLAVE prepares the board.]

Antyll. I love them.

A little salt, some of the oil and wine,
Of this and that first portions—so;
These to the lares on our lambent hearth
Rendering as offerings with a pious prayer,
Their protection will forefend all peril.

Mucia. Most excellent Antyllius!

[Scene closes with ANTYLLIUS sacrificing to his household gods.]

Act Three.

TIME—Morning of the second day.

SCENE I.—*The Temple of Jupiter.*

OPIMIUS *in his official robes, his toga drawn up over his head, sacrificing. Flamens, haruspices and other attendants, among them ANTYLLIUS, in the background. Exposed on the flower-crowned altar lies the slain sacrifice, decked with wreaths and ribbons. Haruspices are examining the entrails.*

Opim. To mortal eyes obscure, Olympus' mists
Enshroud the gods to man; yet not obscure
To Jove are man's affairs and destinies,
As signs avouch and unambiguous portents
In bird, beast, winds, the lightning and the clouds—
Signs which the pious eye acknowledges, nor less
Dreams adminiculate and guiding oracles.

[*Stretches out his hands to the eastern sky.*
Hail, Jupiter! Panomphean godhead, hail!
Rome seeks her gods, and in her consul's voice
Implores an auspice—Oh, direct Opimius!
Vouchsafe clear omens, sanction his designs,
Big with high import to the Roman state,
And what that bodes the suppliant nations know:
But to the side adverse if Jove incline,
More be it shown! Opimius bows to fate.

An Attendant. The god accepts the sacrifice.

[Prayers and sacred music, libations and incense.

HARUSPICES come forward.

Optim. Declare the auspice.

Haruspez. Great Optimus!

The beast is perfect in the noble parts,
But, lo, the rumen holds a feculent mass,
Which presseth on the gullet, and half fills
That tube—As though an effort at vomition
Were with the last strength made.

Another Augur. We interpret it
That Rome, long cloyed and crammed with a crude
surfeit
Of politician's crotchets, will now retch,
And cast out what offends her.

Optim. We accept the omen,
Reading Jove's will in the interpretation,
Wisely and with true piety declared.
Prepare the sacrificial feast, ye priests,
And let the throngs seek home. But first, Antyllus,
Bear round this viscus; thrust it in their faces
Who most conspire sedition; rate them plainly,
And then attend us to the senate-house.
Illicet. *[Exit ANTULLIUS—More incense and libations,*
on which the scene closes.

SCENE II.—*Before the Temple.*

FULVIUS, POMPONIUS, LICINIUS, *other partisans,*
CITIZENS.

Pompon. The omens pleased our consul—
With joyous energy he thanked the deity.

Fulv. The sun may set on him grieving,
As Gracchus now at home. Is not that Antyllius,
Coming from the temple?

Pompon. It is. Oh, that same Antyllius
Could I mark up with Greek characters—those
Of Harmodius and Aristogiton.

[Flourishing the stilus shown before.]

Fulv. Apt in that scholarship
Might Fulvius prove too, Pomponius.

Licin. I have my instrument.

Others. And I, and I, and I.

[All flourish still with hostile exclamations.]

Pompon. The mouth-piece;—
Blustering like the north wind.

Enter ANTULLIUS.

Fulv. This baited first our Gracchus with the
kingship,
That ancient damning trick.

Antyll. Hear, all true Romans! Hear in me
Optimius;—
Great Jove defends us from our enemies,

Scene II.

The Death of Gracchus.

Most deadly since within, but now at bay;—
See, citizens, what omens are vouchsafed—

[*All throng round him.*

O'er-filled with rankness, view this heifer stomach,
And mark how near that rankness is rejected:
The omen means, declare our holy augurs,
That Rome, long sick, shall shortly now recover,
Rejecting from her inwards what offends her.

Pompon. From what recover, mouth-piece?

[*Jostling ANTYLLIUS one way.*

Fulv. Cursed cankerous sore,
With thee still in her, how can Rome know health?

[*Pushing him back.*

Pompon. Hush, the doctor would speak more—
We'll learn how bad our state was.

[*All partisans push, haul and ill-use ANTYLLIUS.*

Antyll. [*Getting his balance.*] Insolent and contumelious!

Opimius' scourge is circling for your backs—
Far hence, far hence! Called I not true Romans?
You are to them as offal. Ranc'rous knaves,
Make way for honest men! As disguised Latins,
Ye deserve to be beaten through the forum,
The tag of your crimes on your necks.

[*Extends his naked arm, a great insult, and angrily shakes his fist at them.*

Fulv. This to me, a consul once who triumphed!

[*Menaces ANTYLLIUS—He turns away.*

The Death of Gracchus.

Act III,

Pompon. O stilus, wilt thou stick?

[Stabs ANTYLLIUS with it.]

Fulv. Most ready, O most excellent Pomponius!

[Stabs ANTYLLIUS.]

Licin. For Gracchus!

One more thrust home for Gracchus!

[Stabs ANTYLLIUS. Bystanders scatter with loud outcries.]

Antyll. Help—Opimius—Friends—

[Others of GRACCHUS's party fall on and finish him.]

Fulv. *[Throwing his stilus at the body.]* Now is it indeed put to the final touch,

Now civil war must arbitrate for faction.

For Gracchus! Who loves Gracchus? Follow me,
And strike for freedom against tyranny. *[Exit.]*

Pompon. Arm, arm, arm! Ho for the bloody trial!
We strike for Gracchus—Death or equality!

[Exeunt POMPONIUS, LICINIUS, etc., all shouting "Gracchus."]

Enter OPIMIUS, attended by Victors, SEPTIMULEIUS and others.

Opim. Look, look, O Romans! Ill-starred Antyllius,
Canst thou not speak? *[Stooping.]*

Septim. He is stone dead.

Opim. *[Rising.]* Murder throws down her gage, defying Rome,

Scene III.

The Death of Gracchus.

But law shall drench her streets with felon blood,
And order be restored.—The sword, my friends,
Shall mourn Antyllus.—Bear his corpse away,
And place it on a bier as I shall bid—

[*Whispers to SEPTIMULETIUS.*

Full in the market-place before the Senate.

O Flaccus, Fulvius Flaccus! now I love thee.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—The atrium of GRACCHUS's house.

CORNELIA and LICINIA.

Lic. [*Pointing.*] He sleeps!
All night he paced distraught, but now he rests.

Corn. 'Tis well, disturb him not—The drowsy god
May bring nepenthe to his burdened soul:
But not for long for Caius may it last,—
His troubles fast approach their dreadful crisis.

Lic. Woe! sayst thou so?
What blacker cloud, ostentful to his prospects,
Robs our dull sky of hope?

Corn. Death.

Lic. [*Shuddering.*] Thou hast dreamed it too, then,
Mother of unhappy Romans?

Corn. Unhappy?

The Death of Gracchus.

Act III,

Lic. Was not thy son Tiberius?
Is not Caius?

Corn. Say not *unhappy*,
If thou but meanst *die young*.—Man's a tree,
And generations branches; men but leaves,
Frail things that fall with every passing gust—
Sickness and famine, war and pestilence,
Malignant blasts of chance, inclemencies
Of time, and blighting vices; killing frosts
Of hopes decayed, fine phrensies come to naught—
And if one lasts to wither on the stalk,
Good hap, what odds? He bears bleak winds alone,
And, long regretful, pines to join his fellows.

Lic. Why thy first words?
What overplus of ill know'st thou for Caius?

Corn. Be sure, his enemies elate
Recruit their forces and conspire his end.
Yet what is life? Philosophy's derision,
The forfeit of a quinsy or a surfeit,
The day-dream of fools' hopes. Heroic roles
My sons selected: one hath sealed his faith
Already with his life's blood; and the other,
If not a changeling, so must wed oblivion.
Dost thou reproach Cornelia? Their misfortunes
Spring from unwise ambitions, not from crime.

Lic. Austere Cornelia, I would not reproach thee,—
Oft hast thou sought to temper with discretion

Scene III.

The Death of Gracchus.

The seething fervor of their youthful souls—

[*A noise and a voice within.*]

Enter GRACCHUS, distractedly.

Gracch. This way, this way—He vanishes—Tiberius!

The boat rocks on the Styx, but Caius follows—

Steady, steady, Charon!—Here's thy obol—

[*Stops abruptly, staring at them.*]

Lic. [*Clasping him.*] Alas, stare not so wildly. Caius, Caius,

Licinia holds thee—See, it is not Charon,

Nor Mercury pointing to the shades.

Gracch. Licinia! Mother! [*Sinking on a couch.*]

Corn. My son, thou hast but dreamed,—

Even if Tiberius hath appeared, 'tis well;

Make but an offering to our troubled manes,

And he will be appeased. What was the message
Of the disturbing vision?

Gracch. [*Shuddering.*] Pallid he came, and touched
his gaping wounds,

And as my blood in icy rivulets ran,

The muddy flood shook from his matted hair,

And then sepulchral spoke—"My brother, Caius,

The heroes wait thee; put thy house in order,

Make up to-night thy last viaticum,

For the infernal journey"—

Lic. No more?

The Death of Gracchus.

Act III.

Gracch. I woke, and he was gone—Methought
He fled this way.

Corn. [Without emotion.] Thou wilt die.

Lic. [Violently.] Cruel Cornelia! all are not Cas-
sandræ

Who essay to prophecy.

[Weeps at GRACCHUS's feet—A great noise with-
out.—All spring up.

Enter FULVIUS, POMPONIUS and others, armed.

Pompon. Our leader! Where's our leader?

Fulv. Gracchus, to arms! Destruction gapes her
maw,

And death rides horrent on Bellona's brow.
To arms, great tribune! Vindicate thy rights.

[Exit CORNELIA.

Gracch. What means this?

Fulvius, thou grip'st me with a bloody hand!

Fulv. 'Tis suilline,

From veins now stagnant to the dead heart—
Those of base-born Antyllus. I'll wash it off
When I have sent Opimius to join him.

Gracch. Antyllus slain!

Apparitor to the consul, Mucia's son?

Fulv. He.

Gracch. O madmen! How, where, when the deed?
What motive?

Fulv. He with audacious front presumed t' insult
The friends of Rome and Roman liberty.

Scene III.

The Death of Gracchus.

Pompon. 'Fore the temple with our still we dispatched him—

Left in his corse for Drusus to make votes with.

Gracch. O, dangerous excess; O, madman zeal!
Gracchus is lost, destroyed by his friends.

Re-enter CORNELIA.

Corn. The Senate is convening,
The forum hums with angry citizens; soldiers
In troops are passing, summoned by Opimius.
Bale is thy influence and thy shadow death,
Fulvius Flaccus, man of evil genius;—
Atè rules thee, thy acts and all thy counsels.

Fulv. Madam, I leave that to Greek sophists,
Who feast and drink at thy most bounteous table,
And leave thee for thy viands and luxuries
Horns and some kindred quibbles. As for Flaccus,
He goes not to his death like a tame lambkin.

[Exit, followed by POMPONIUS, etc.]

Enter PHILOCRATES and other members of GRACCHUS'S household in alarm.

Philoc. O master, angry mutterings are heard
On every side against thee—Thy own life
Hangs in men's breath, as partner in the murder.

Lic. Dire deed, dire time, dire friends!
O Caius, clear thyself—Nay, I will go,
And swear thy innocence to all the Senate.

[Turns impetuously.]

The Death of Gracchus.

Act III,

Gracch. [*Harshly.*] Woman, stay!
Go to thy child,—demur not with a look,
I charge thee on thy duty, hence! No wailing.
Gracchus will to his friends, and as they fare
So too must Gracchus. Comfort her, my mother,
And as thou canst, instil thy soul in her.

Corn. Come, girl. Caius, acquit thyself
As best befits a Gracchus. Fare thee well.

[*Exit CORNELIA, leading away LICINIA.*]

Gracch. Haste after Fulvius, some one,—bid him
know

Gracchus submits himself to his direction,
Joining him in an hour with his retainers.

[*Exit PHILOCRAATES.*]

Tiberius, Tiberius! art thou nigh still?

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE IV.—*Before GRACCHUS's house.*

LICINIUS, PHILOCRAATES, and an armed escort
a little aloof.

Enter GRACCHUS, unarmed, from within.

Gracch. Now, weakness down! May Caius Gracchus
weep?

Alas, his eyes might flow like waterspouts—
Sweet, busy spot, my domicile! adieu—

Scene IV.

The Death of Gracchus.

O woman's fondness! Memory, draw thy curtains,
And eyes, forget to see—Yond gravelly path
Winds gray into the forum—Placid then,
When first we trod these grounds up that I led her,
My dear Licinia—

*Enter LICINIA hastily from within, a child
in her arms.*

Lic. Thou didst call me, Caius,
Breaking thine own injunction.

*[CORNELIA appears in the doorway, and stands
there, surveying them.]*

Gracch. Thou wast not to follow—
Our farewells have been said.

Lic. Not come when Gracchus calls upon my name!

Gracch. Grief whispered it—Or did I shriek aloud,
To compose my sharp convulsions?

Lic. Thou hast often left me
In trepid tenderness, imagining dangers,
E'en when men loved thee and extolled thy virtues,
Shrunk from thy frown or eager sought thy friend-
ship—

As all the world fawns on exsurgent greatness—
E'en then my doting heart conceived fond terrors,
And thankful, praised the powers that safe restored
thee,

When in the eve returning from the forum
Thy triumphs made thee dearer to Licinia—

The Death of Gracchus.

Act III,

But now, oh! now—

[*CORNELIA withdraws.*]

Gracch. I will return as then,
Thrice potent from the battle, rehabilitate,—
If not, as still I hope, avert the conflict.

Lic. Fears! is it then war?
Not groundless then those rumors that appal me?

Gracch. War and proscription's all the prospect—
Yet
Naught means proscription whilst the power's still
dubious
Whose hatred rises to that pitch. Licinia,
The people love me still, be well assured.

Lic. Thou lean'st upon a reed,
Swayed by the wind, and broken by the blast
Of aught that comes victorious—Or rewards
With more than thou canst give. Oh! take this
dagger,
And trust its point, but ne'er the people's gratitude.

[*Producing and extending a weapon to him.*]

Gracch. I would go to them
E'en as I'm wont to go to th' assembly—
Unarmed and peaceable; but for Licinia
I'll carry this—Less arms than talisman;
Blessed with thy love, 'twill ward me from all danger.
[*Taking it and putting it away.*]

Scene IV.

The Death of Gracchus.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Mess. Fulvius recruits now on the Aventine
The popular forces:—Me he sends to learn
If Gracchus has deserted him? Adding,
Some knave may soon be richer by a head's weight
If he delay his coming.

Gracch. Go back, fellow too blunt,
And tell him Gracchus comes upon thy message.

[Exit MESSENGER.]

Now!—*[Embracing and passionately kissing LICINIA
and the child, he would go—She holds him.]*

Lic. Suppliant to winds and waves
For the poor relics of my undone Caius,
The eve will find me. Cruel, brawling war,
Hadst thou but claimed the Gracchi! Foreign foes
Are kinder than intestine—O Numantia,
And bare Sardinia! had ye claimed the brothers,
Not now Licinia, like that other widow,
Had mourned a death unhonored—

Gracch. How! already?
Enough, release me—Nay, nay, nay, nay!
Woman's fears are not prophetic. *[Draws away.]*

Lic. They are, they are—
O go not yet, not yet!

*[Puts the child at his feet and kneels,
clasping his knees.]*

Gracch. God Jupiter, it is too much.
[Unclasps himself with force and turns away.]

The Death of Gracchus.

Act III, Scene IV.

Lic. O heavens, thou art cruel—
But most, oh! most to Gracchus.

[Sinks over in a swoon—Others approach.]

Gracch. To breaking
She pulls my heart-strings. Lift her, some attendants,
And with my child bear her away to Crassus—
Her brother will secure their safety.
Gods, chance, or destiny! you can wound no more.

[Exeunt different ways.]

Act Four.

TIME—Still morning.

SCENE I.—*The Senate-chamber.*

The Senate sitting, Victors and others attending.

Optim. Patres Conscripti! Venerable Rome!

Rise now to your high functions—We convene
To close a breach which threatens the state's disruption:
Sedition's clamors echoing through our streets,
Hark! you may hear. [*Noises without.*] Blustery
winds of faction

Swell high that ocean,—Laws, those ancient bulwarks
Against the rabble's passions, creak and groan,
And still plebicolists fan the dreadful tempest.
What can we look for, gods! Our sacrifices
Profaned; Antyllius, acting for your consul—
Himself affronted first—so near Jove's fane
Slain like the beast oblate, but with less mercy—
How, Fathers, can we hope here melioration?
Than with extinction's brand, how less respond!

[*Wailing from without—He seems not to hear it.*

Exit LUCIUS FABIUS.

Or shall they rule who never for one instant
Rule their base selves?—Whose envy discontent

The Death of Gracchus.

Act IV.

Oppugns great souls who bring them all they boast of,
The state, laws, history, arts and industries,
The brood of Mind Original, not blind toll,
Still by the few conserved, ne'er by the mob!

[Loud lamentations and outcries from without interrupt him.]

A Senator. With the honorable consul's leave,
Something occurs now in the market-place.

Re-enter LUCIUS FABIVS.

Luc. Fab. Fellow consul, most honorable Senate,
The people mourn Antyllius, as you hear,
Thronged round his body in the market-place,
Whither 'twas borne by universal impulse.

Optim. Somewhat his friends presume in this their
grief.

Luc. Fab. All Rome those friends, how may we
carp at them?

Optim. Then, Conscript Fathers, let us view the
scene,
Shedding hot rheum o'er unhappy Quintus,
Nor spare our eyes, most tender to the dead,
Since serving us and serving too our gods,
And in that service coming to his end.
Thus in a body having honored him,
We will return and consummate our plans.

[Senate rises.]

SCENE II.—*The Forum.*

A bier draped in purple, on which reposes the corpse of ANTYLLIUS, is exposed on a platform littered with flowers and foliage. Multitudes, comprising all classes, surround it, lamenting and vociferating.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Mess. Where's Septimuleius? Septimuleius!

Septim. [*Stepping out.*] Here. What seek you?

Mess. This from Opimius. [*Whispers.*

Septim. [*Whispering.*] All is as his commands are—
So inform him. [*Exit MESSENGER.*

Enter DRUSUS and other tribunes, mourning, branches of cypress and fir in their hands, which they lay on the platform.—Exit SEPTIMULEIUS.

Drusus. No plebeians here, no optimates,
We mourn as Romans, common in our grief,
And all incensed against the murderers.
Rome shall bespeak magnificent exequies,
With funeral games, and songs, and monument,
In honor of Antyllus.

*Enter OPIMIUS, LUCIUS FABIUS and the Senate,
victors attending.*

Opim. The din is hushed—By whose authority—
O Quintus, Quintus! [*Approaching.*
Thy couch should be of ivory palled with gold,
For better man, though poor thou wast and humble,

The Death of Gracchus.

Act IV,

Ne'er drew patrician breath. Friends, Conscript
Fathers, *[Turning away.]*

Forget these tears—I am a Roman, ay,
But first a man; and swelling from the heart
In humid drops my grief speaks for Antyllius,
As my voice breaks for him. Why is he dead?
Because he served Opimius and the Senate,
Because he loved the state and served his gods!—
What more?

Enter MUCIA, haltingly, supported by SEPTIMULEIUS.

Septim. Courage, old mother, courage!
All Rome's thy son, to make amends for Quintus.

Mucia. [Quaveringly.] What dost thou say? I come
to clasp Antyllius,
See him I cannot. Spoke he not, my friends,
Before he died? No message for blind Mucia?

[She is led to the bier.]
Lies he now near? *[Groping.]* The gods are kind, they
say,

But sobs choke off some prayers—His beard was curly,
And his nose hooked e'en when a little boy—
His voice—Woe! that is still—What's here?

[Trembling violently.]
Knaves! trick me not—Perhaps it is not Quintus,
He comes not always at the selfsame hour—
Who swears he's dead? Let me but kiss his lips!
I feel a hand—Ah, did it once caress me,
Mucia would know the touch—He loves his mother

Scene II.

The Death of Gracchus.

As most men love their wantons—True, his ear,—
A Greek left there a notch—I tell ye, fools,—

[*Shrieks.*

No, no! 'tis he—It is, it is Antyllus!

[*MUCIA falls, and after a few gasps dies at the foot of the bier.*

Optim. Run for my freedman, Philo—

Lucius Fab. My slave from Cos
Stands in the crowd—Timoleon!

[*The physician comes forward and examines MUCIA.*

Optim. Is she dead?

Phys. There is no breath in her, her heart beats
not—

'Tis death, not a lipothymy.

[*Terrible outcries burst from the people, calling for vengeance on GRACCHUS, FULVIUS, etc.*

First Senator. Woe, woe, alas! All must die for it.

Second. Put a price on their heads.

Third. Gracchus' not less than Fulvius'.

Fourth. In his name they murder.

Fifth. Proclaim all outlaws, Gracchus first.

First Citizen. Optimus, the consul,
I once loved Gracchus—Now I serve you.

Second. And I and all my sons.

Third. Can one call himself Roman and hold back?
He is a monster.

The Death of Gracchus.

Act IV,

Fourth. He is my neighbor—
But Fulvius' deeds are his deeds.

Fifth. Vengeance on Gracchus—Vengeance, vengeance!

[Spectators cry it furiously, moving in concert.

Opim. *[Raising his hand, they quiet down.]* The
 gods strike heavily when they chasten us,
But never ill redounds but to some end—
Lo, by two deaths Rome is again united.
Lift up the dame, attendants, tenderly,
And, Septimuleius, guard her to her house.
We will give orders for her funeral rites,
And Rome and Opimius bear the charge thereof,
Not less than for Antyllus. Meanwhile, the law,
My friends, will find the murderers.

[MUCIA'S body is borne away.

Lucius Fab. Opimius must be dictator.

First Senator. I support that.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Mess. Fulvius proclaims now civil war, and
 musters
Slaves, aliens, and the basest of the rabble
Into an army on th' Aventine hill.

Opim. Bear our commands to Strabo
To march his Cretan archers to the forum.

[Exit MESSENGER.

Lucius Fab. Again, Lucius Opimius must be dictator.

Scene III.

The Death of Gracchus.

First Senator. Who else can save the state?

Second. He must have absolute power.

Third. He shall have absolute power.

Fourth. Why here debate the matter?

It is as soon despatched within as talked of.

Lucius Fab. Opimius, come. *[Senate retires.]*

Opim. Citizens, remain,—be orderly,
And heed your lawful tribunes. We retire
To abrogate all noxious laws; and soon
You'll read our will in a plain proclamation.

[Exit OPIMIUS. Manent citizens, etc.]

SCENE III.—The Forum.

CITIZENS; SOLDIERS in the background.

Enter a CRIER from the Senate-house.

Crier. Know all men, citizens and aliens, that *Lucius Opimius*, consul, hath been vested by the Roman Senate with power extraordinary to put down, quell and extirpate all foes of Rome within the confines of this our city; or beyond it, within the boundaries of the republic. And furthermore, know all men that, pursuant thereunto, the said *Lucius Opimius*, Dictator, now declareth abrogated and of no effect all laws, ordinances and regulations whatsoever introduced by

The Death of Gracchus.

Act IV,

Caius Sempronius Gracchus, late tribune—And attaints, proclaims and brands as outlaws and murderers the said Caius Sempronius Gracchus and Fulvius Flaccus, once consul. And unto each and every one of you is offered for the head of Caius Sempronius Gracchus its weight in gold; and for the head of Fulvius Flaccus its weight, likewise in gold. Who-soever shall aid, harbor or abet in any way the said Caius Sempronius Gracchus or the said Fulvius Flaccus, their friends or partisans, shall then and there be deemed outlaws, their lives declared forfeited to the state, and their goods subject to confiscation. A proclamation.

[CRIER posts a copy, and goes off—Crowds remaining reading.]

SCENE IV.—Before the Temple of Jupiter.

Enter PHILOCRATES disguised, a scroll in his hand.

Philoc. This billet will I post as I was bid,
And let them read who most may profit by it.

[Affixes it and exit.]

Enter several CITIZENS.

First Citizen. Well, so tops spin—
Things take a desperate turn for Caius Gracchus.

Scene IV.

The Death of Gracchus.

Second. What's here? Hold. [Reads aloud.

By the god of this temple, Jupiter Optimus Maximus, by Juno, Minerva, Mars, by Orcus and dread Proserpine, I, Caius Gracchus, swear to you, Romans and countrymen, that my hand and heart are innocent of complicity in the death of Quintus Antyllus, rash, contumelious creature of Lucius Optimus, now by his own arts dictator and tyrant. I sanction not murder, the ready recourse of those who put down Tiberius; and not less, it would seem, their purpose who would now extirpate Caius Gracchus, and with him Roman liberties. On the Aventine Mount assemble now all who believe this; and as for those who do not, or dare not, may their conscience rest easier than their bodies after the conflict.

CAIUS SEMPRONIUS GRACCHUS, Tribune.

First Citizen. Mars, as for me,
He wastes his wax. I'm not of the faex populi
Who ask fat largesses, and, not getting 'em,
Go hungry from sheer laziness till sedition
Extort a meal again.

Second. When, like stray curs
Humped o'er the casual bone, they quit their snarling.

First. For a season.

Third. He draws but the most lousy of our riffraff,
Slaves, aliens, and the botchy scum of camps,
With here and there a ruined heir; some veterans
Attached to Fulvius,—and adventurous rustics.

The Death of Gracchus.

Act IV, Scene IV.

Fourth. Well, Gracchus had notable wrong;—
Had they not slain Antyllus Rome had risen.

[Exeunt the group—Others come, read, gesticulate, and hurriedly depart.]

Act Five.

TIME—Still morning.

SCENE I.—*The Aventine Mount.*

*The Tribune's forces, variously armed, in review by
FULVIUS, POMPONIUS, CORNELIUS, etc.*

Fulv. Pomponius, view our rabble—"Tis a rout
To make god Mars forswear the field, I think:
Tailors and cobblers lead the van, while barbers
Vie with the branded turnspit—O Roman liberty,
Dost thou depend on these? Yon square-torsed brawler,
Who leads those plough-boys there, yon loud centurion,
I'll trust to run away first;—he, Pomponius,
Was once a gladiator—Mocks, true soldiers hate 'em
Worse than the sons of slaves. Now come their betters,
Some Celtiberian veterans; the next group
Are more that sacked old Carthage—Murena,
O Murena! shall we die together this time?

[*To a soldier.*

Soldier. Hail! That as the gods will,
And Fulvius Flaccus.

Fulv. A bold Ajax! The oak leaf and the mural
Oft decked his brows:—Once ambushed in a defile,
He slew ten Gauls before my very eyes.
Here comes our sickness.

The Death of Gracchus.

Act V.

Enter GRACCHUS and his escort.

Gracch. Fulvius, I hear how thou didst pass the night,—

In riot and unseemly drunkenness.

Fulv. How, reproaches?

Drink puts the edge upon a soldier's valor—

Gracchus methinks reposed quite differently.

[Significantly.]

Gracch. *[Coldly.]* I hear thee.

Can we not yet compose our differences,

Negotiating amicably with the Senate?

Fulv. Since weak our armament and these our forces,

The dregs of Rome, and not her citizens,

That seemeth not ill counsel. Who shall go?

Gracchus perhaps, or Fulvius?

His youngest son. Antonius offers

His person for the mission, please you.

Gracch. Brave youth!

The gods inspire thee—More than Marcus Curtius

May Rome applaud Antonius.

Fulv. Humph.

Gracch. Nor shalt thou fall a sacrifice. Fulvius,

The consul durst not touch him:—Let him go

As herald to the Senate, bearing terms

Of pacification.

Fulv. True, that character may protect him,—

He shall go. Pomponius, place our sentries,

Scene II.

The Death of Gracchus.

And pitch our camp: bid all be on their guard,
And as thou canst maintain strict discipline.
Impress all stragglers—let not one depart
Who nears our ranks in idle curiosity—
So shall we win recruits or make them such.
Come, Gracchus; we will frame the articles;
And thou, Antonius, wait upon our summons.

[Exeunt different ways.]

SCENE II.—The Forum.

OPIMIUS, SEPTIMULEIUS, and forces.

Optim. Foregathered on their beggar's hill, the
rebels

Invite but quicker slaughter and completer,
For their foolhardiness in venturing battle,
Best by such routs eschewed.—What comes?

Enter ANTONIUS with a herald's wand.

Anton. Lucius Opimius, consul, in the names
Of Calus Gracchus and of Fulvius Flaccus,
I come to proffer terms of composition—

Optim. [Harshly.] We receive thee not,
Nor know thy spurious office, since no heralds
From rebels treat yet with the Roman Senate,
Here still supreme and jealous of its honor.
Go, froward boy, and sing them back that message,

The Death of Gracchus.

Act V,

But add, who willingly lay down their arms,—
Save those thou namedst, proscribed traitors both—
Without conditions, trusting in our mercy,
The same may live. Return no more, false herald,
Save at thy peril, if this be not done.

[*Exit* ANTONIUS—OPIMIUS reviews his forces

SCENE III.—*The Aventine Mount.*

GRACCHUS, FULVIUS, POMPONIUS, CORNELIUS.

Fulv. Upon those terms,—
That Gracchus straightway be returned to office,
And all thy edicts, laws and ordinances
Remain in force until a new election
Of tribunes in a neutral assembly
Convoked by thee be held,—we might be safe:
But it was madness if thou hopest for peace
To propose such terms to our triumphant foe—
Scarce will he sniff before he doth reject 'em.

Gracch. Fulvius, have confidence,
Our cause is just and heaven knows our hearts.
Each minute brings a recruit, and our strength
Augments apace, and must bear down Opimius,
If he declines our overtures. But Fulvius,
There is another matter undiscussed—

Scene III.

The Death of Gracchus.

How shall we punish our chief enemies
After the battle?

Pompon. First, as to Opimius—

Fulv. Opimius dies.

Gracch. Well, then, death for Lucius.

Pompon. Livius Drusus—

Fulv. Shall by no means be spared—Nor twenty
others

Whose names I have put down:—the rest, Gracchus,
I will consent to banish.

Gracch. [*Sighing.*] It is a bloody business, Fulvius.

Pompon. Antonius!

Enter ANTONIUS.

Gracch. Soon, soon—What news?

Anton. Opimius will destroy us,
He marches now with all his forces—Hark!

[*Fanfare from a distance.*]

Pompon. And they are all trained soldiers.

Fulv. Let all our own drums beat,
And trumpets blow defiance.

[*Martial music presently from them.*]

Gracch. Antonius, repeat all plainly—
The consul used what words to our proposals?

Anton. He would not hear me,
But with harsh words and gestures spurned this wand,
And turned me back a-menacing my life.

Gracch. His words—exactly.

Anton. [*Repeats.*] “We receive thee not,” etc.

The Death of Gracchus.

Act V,

Fulv. Ho, ho!

Gracch. Thou hast ended,
Naught omitting, naught forgetting?

Anton. Nothing.

Gracch. But durst go back, Antonius,
E'en in the teeth of that same cruel menace?

Anton. Durst! All man has dared a Roman
Puts behind him—a mark to exceed or die.

Gracch. O youth, I love thee. [*Embracing him.*]
Fulvius Flaccus, dost consent?

Fulv. I'd rather see him die
In our own ranks and fighting near his father
Than have him perish helplessly a captive—
Yet have thy will.

Gracch. I will propose new terms
Acceptable to the tyrant, save my laws,
My friends, my followers—but waive all office,
Though Gracchus' life depend on that palladium.
Antonius, bear this message, adding only
What best suggests t' impress him with our power.

Fulv. Go, if at all, with dispatch,
The foe draws nearer.

Gracch. Go, and good fortune speed thee.

Fulv. Kiss thy father, boy—
I could blow my nose.

[*Embraces and kisses his son—Exit ANTONIUS.*]

Gracch. They cannot harm him,—on my soul, they
will not,

Scene IV.

The Death of Gracchus.

His youth, his birth, his office—all protect him.
Fulvius, I'll sit and ponder on our fortunes,
Till he returns with summons for the conference.

Fulv. And I'll inspect our line, prepare for battle,
Enheart our nondescripts—And mayhap join thee.

[*All move off.*]

SCENE IV.—An open place near the Aventine Mount.

Enter ANTONIUS.

Anton. I'll front him boldly with a raucous voice,
Since 'tis assurance still preëmits success,
And wins thee, world, thou ancient harridan,
So deaf to merit, diffidence, and truth.

Enter OPIMIUS, SEPTIMULEIUS, and forces.

Opim. Let the Cretan archers
Begin the fray,—we'll finish with our foot.—
Fool! again? Well—

Anton. The law of nations, Lucius Opimius,
Protects all heralds; and in Rome a faction
In arms contending sure outranks most states,
As it may sway more power. Wilt thou listen?

Opim. They submit?

Anton. Yea, proud consul,
Gracchus submits to compromise, exacting
But for his friends immunity; for his laws

Their full effect and force—

Optim. Ha, ha!

Lictors, seize him; drag him to some dungeon,

And find him pebbles to improve his speech—

The senate of the dead may hear him later.

On! *[Exeunt, ANTONIUS being dragged away.]*

SCENE V.—*The Aventine Mount.*

The action in progress:—As the scene opens GRACCHUS's followers are throwing down their arms and running away in disorder. Piles of dead, slain by arrows, here and there in the background.

Enter on the one side OPIMIUS and soldiers, on the other FULVIUS and a handful of men, desperately fighting.

Fulv. I'm ambushed by a cursèd proclamation,
Which drew off all my riffraff. Close quarters, ho!
Hew down the Cretans! 'Twas their fatal shafts
Lent eloquence to Optimius—Halloa, Lucius,
Dictator, ho! Some sword-play now with Flaccus,
He loves not amnesty like half his army.—
Murena's down too.

[Engages OPIMIUS—Exeunt fighting.]

Enter GRACCHUS, LICINIUS, and PHILOCRATES.

Scene V.

The Death of Gracchus.

Gracch. All's lost! Our forces are seduced,
Who were not slain by the first flight of arrows.
Freedom, farewell! Fortune, false arbitress,
Doffs to the eagles of the tyrant.

[*Droops on LICINIUS' shoulder.*]

*Enter POMPONIUS and soldiers of OPIMIUS,
fighting.*

Pompon. Gracchus, Gracchus,
Here's scope for Roman valor, not Greek eloquence.
The tribune and the people! Ho, the tribune!
Who fights against the people? Gracchus, Gracchus!

[*Soldiers engage GRACCHUS, etc.—Enter OPIMIUS
and reinforcements—GRACCHUS's side is driven
out, pursued.*]

Opim. So, so, this is the people; this his strength
Who long played lord among us. Pish! his army,
Proud name, was vanquished by a single crier,
Who shouted terms amongst them—Are they cap-
tured?

Enter SEPTIMULEIUS.

Septim. Both have escaped,
But are pursued, and must be slain or taken.

Opim. Leave that work to others—Stop, I'll look
to it;
And, Septimuleius, haste thou to his dungeon,
And see that young Antonius is despatched. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*Before a Bath-house.*

Enter FULVIUS and CORNELIUS, pursued.

Corn. Sire, sire, the bath! I'll stand 'em off—
A Flaccus, a Flaccus, a Flaccus!

[Turning on pursuers.

Fulv. Gracchus has fled the field and saved himself—

Then why not Fulvius?

[Runs in haltingly, followed by CORNELIUS and pursuers.

Enter OPIMIUS and more soldiers.

Opim. Sore wounded, Fulvius fled,
Yet well I know he fears not, but by living
Would wreak more mischief. Soft! now Gracchus.
[Exit. Re-enter soldiers with the heads of FULVIUS and CORNELIUS.

SCENE VII.—*The Temple of Diana.*

Enter GRACCHUS, POMPONIUS, LICINIUS, and PHILOCRATES.

Gracch. Is all lost, Pomponius?

Pompon. *[Laconically.]* All—
Field, Rome, wives, friends, chattels, honor.
Gracch. Fulvius?

Scene VII.

The Death of Gracchus.

Pompon. Dead—I saw his head amongst them,
Stuck on a spear, and bobbing up and down
In the van of our pursuers.

Licin. Hark!

[*Noise without.*]

Gracch. They come—
Flee, flee, my faithful friends—Farewell.

[*Draws his sword and wounds himself.*]

Pompon. [*Disarming him.*] Art mad?
Where's now thy spirit? Thou shalt lead us still,—
This Gracchus? Nay—Licinius, watch the door—
O Gracchus, Caius Gracchus, why so wan?
How many men have lived to win a kingdom,
Surviving from a fall as low as thine!

Enter ATTENDANT of the temple.

Attend. Your enemies approach,
But there is still an open door to safety,
If with dispatch you follow.

Licin. Haste, haste, Gracchus.

Pompon. Yes, yes—The temple's sanctuary
Will scarcely be respected.

Licin. At least our hunger not.

Gracch. So be it, since you will it. O Diana!

[*Kneeling at the altar.*]

Chaste goddess, if thou own'st malignant influence,
Afflict the Romans! May they live in thralldom,
And die in misery; harried with oppression,
May no deliverer rise; but let this people,

The Death of Gracchus.

Act V,

Sprung from a bastard seed unknown to Brutus,
When most they groan remember Caius Gracchus,
Attainted for their sakes—In his extremity
Deserted like a dog infirm with service.
Tiberius, Tiberius, Tiberius!

[Exeunt.]

SCENE VIII.—Before a narrow wooden bridge.

*Enter GRACCHUS, POMPONIUS, LICINIUS, and
PHILOCRATES, running.*

Gracch. [*Looking back.*] They gain on us—What's
left except to die,
Th' effectual flight?

Pompon. Caius, take the bridge—
We will maintain the passage—Our bodies
Will bar pursuit till thou hast made the stream.

Licin. Philocrates, attend him.

Gracch. What! leave you here,
True friends of mould heroic? Let me die first.

Pompon. Flee, flee, O, flee! Thou art the living
spark

Of Roman liberty—We brushwood fagots,
Whose like all cities, wilds of men, afford.
Gracchus, I love thee—Do this for Pomponius.

Licin. And for Licinius.
Across the stream not far there lies that grove,

Scene IX.

The Death of Gracchus.

With a small temple dedicate to the Furies—
Make it for sanctuary.

Pompon. They come!

[Cries and trumpets of pursuers heard.]

Gracch. Loth am I still to flee,
But for thy speech, Pomponius, I obey.
Farewell, farewell!

*[Exeunt GRACCHUS and PHILOCRATES. Enter
OPIMIUS and soldiers, attacking POMPONIUS
and LICINIUS. They fall after a sharp fight,
and pursuers rush across the bridge.]*

SCENE IX.—*The Grove dedicated to the Furies.*

*Enter GRACCHUS and PHILOCRATES, stumbling
and falling along.*

Philoc. Courage, master! Had he but loaned his
steed,
Thy neighbor that we met with and but passed!
The deed had saved thy life.

Gracch. He gave us words of cheer,
And mouthed methought a blessing—That was Vet-
tius,

Whom once I saved from prison. So, so, so,
I begged his horse in vain—A very man!

[Sinks down.]

Epilogue

Thus perished Gracchus:—With him all his laws,
 Reforms, and followers in the people's cause,—
 Three thousand lost their lives and property,
 And e'en their memory durst not honored be;
 And Plutarch adds, Licinia worst was treated,
 Her marriage jointure being declared escheated.
 Opimius triumphed, and to Concord built
 A temple reared on bloodshed and on guilt:
 But soon his false and thieving heart was shown,
 When sent an envoy to Numidia's throne— 10
 Corrupted there, his misdeeds proved at home,
 He died the hatred and the scorn of Rome.
 The Gracchi honored—mind, they both were dead—
 When bare their bones somewhere in Tiber's bed,
 Statues uprose; the spots where they were slain,
 Declared now holy, people thronged amain;
 Thither brought first-fruits, came to worship there,
 And as to gods their offerings made with prayer.—
 Such still the people! Still reformers swarm,
 And hard the question, Do they good or harm? 20
 Their faults are patent—Arrogance and force
 Ne'er yet turned human nature from its course:
 And sure too many, speaking of the head,
 Are LIVING filled like Gracchus SLAIN—with lead.

A Tribute to the Supreme Court

A Tribute

To the Supreme Court of the United States.

Hail, Areopagus! august Tribunal, hail!
The mighty dead rejoice—thou dost not fail
The Constitution, cowed by rabble rage,
But calm, judicial, strong, defy'st the age—
Defy'st, though clamor with ten million throats
Bawl innovation; swelled by traitor notes
From public clerks sworn to Organic Law,
Sworn to conserve, not to destroy nor claw.
And hard by these in perfidy and folly
Comes the Assembly, now degenerate, 10
And in its ruin presage melancholy
Of what may come. O Freedom, O Free State,
What hast thou left if the Assembly fails,
Thy stronghold and best heritage? Thy fate
Is wrapped in that—and madness there prevails,
Weakness and madness, perfidy and dotage,—
There where the nation's wisdom once and elo-
quence—
Emblazoned still on history's brightest page—
Was heard and heeded; there prevailed, and thence
Issuing, prevailed too in the public mind, 20
Since there its pick and quiddity;—now declined,

A Tribute to the Supreme Court.

Unfit to guide or counsel. Blind, O blind,
Are all but thou, great Court! None understand
The state as an inheritance in entail,
With each new generation in the land
But as a usufructuary—none to fail
To hand the precious legacy intact,
Intact the soul of Law, our Constitution,
Adown the years, till all fulfilled the tract
Of a great nation's life—from institution, 30
Not less time surely than a thousand years!—
Earth's glory, not her kings' derisive theme,
Such is thy meaning, such thy mighty scope,
America! not less thy patriarchs' dream,
Not less great statesmen's ken, true patriots'
hope.—

Who knows that vista? Not our legislators,
Base valets of the present, whom weak fears
And selfish interests rule; not innovators,
Usurping legislation which endears,
With patronage as bribe or bludgeon—No! 40
These are false mountebanks who work for fees—
Power, office or vainglory—juggling cures,
Which leave the face clean which the public sees,
But graft within a poison which endures—
All court the hour; and one, at least, as mad
As once Herostratus, to scotch a rat
Would fire a greater temple. Executives grow
Indeed too insolent—whether good or bad,

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